

## **REMARKS**

Claims 1-8 are pending in the present application and stand rejected. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the present rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

### **REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102**

Claims 5-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Enyedy et al. The Outstanding Office Action states that Enyedy et al. shows a gas control means 202 in the torch head of a plasma arc torch in Figure 11.

Referring to Figure 11 of Enyedy et al. (both 5,796,067 and 5,938,949), the solenoid unit 202 is de-energized to control a supply of gas to the underside of the piston 224 in order to move the electrode 208 away from the nozzle 196 for operation of the plasma arc torch. The gas is controlled solely for the purpose of moving the electrode 208 away from the nozzle during operation (solenoid 202 de-energized) and against the nozzle when the plasma arc torch is not in operation (solenoid 202 energized). As further shown in this figure, the solenoid unit 202 does not control the flow of gas into the plasma arc chamber (the space between the electrode 208 and the nozzle 196) through passageway 212, and as such, does not provide gas control in accordance with the claimed invention.

Claims 5-8 have been amended to more clearly indicate that the supply of gas is being controlled to a plasma arc chamber of the plasma arc torch, a limitation that is clearly missing from the Enyedy et al. reference. The claimed invention controls the supply of gas in order to build up pressure local to the torch head (Claims 5, 6, and 8)

and to maintain an operational pressure local to the torch head (Claim 7) for supply to the plasma arc chamber, which is neither taught nor suggested by the Enyedy et al. reference. The solenoid 202 of Enyedy et al. is used for an entirely different purpose, i.e. to move the electrode 208. Since the solenoid unit 202 of Enyedy et al. does not control the flow of gas to the plasma arc chamber, Applicants submit that Claims 5-8 cannot be anticipated and respectfully request that the present claim rejections be withdrawn.

#### **REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103**

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Enyedy et al. in view of Howard. The Outstanding Office Action states that it would have been obvious to modify the Enyedy et al. system to have a handle as disclosed by Howard.

Claims 1-4 have also been amended to include the limitation of controlling the flow of gas being supplied to the plasma arc chamber as described above. Since Enyedy et al. does not disclose, teach, or suggest such gas control, there would be no motivation to combine the Enyedy et al. and the Howard references. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1-4 be withdrawn.

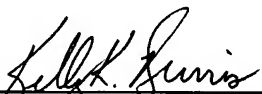
#### **CONCLUSION**

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the

outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (314) 726-7524.

Respectfully submitted,

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